

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Moreover, the Sinclair Broadcasting decision to force its stations to play the anti-Kerry documentary during prime time, preempting regular programming screams of partisanship and favoritism, something I don't wish to see in my local programming. A service that is used free of charge, should strive extra hard to remain balanced. If Sinclair Broadcasting is going to air an anti-Kerry documentary, then they should, at the very least, offer an equal spot to air a documentary on President Bush's military and/or Presidential record. This country is about equality and broadcasting should be a premier example of it.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.